

The door at the Green Communities Division is always open, here to serve all communities in a first-in-the-nation, ground-up sustainability effort led by cities and towns, cementing the Commonwealth's position as the national leader in tackling our energy and climate challenges.

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Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources

GREEN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Creating a

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Creating a Greener Energy Future for the Commonwealth

Governor Deval Patrick and the Massachusetts Legislature passed the landmark Green Communities Act in July 2008. This visionary new legislation created the Green Communities Division under the state's Department of Energy Resources to enable cities and towns to become more sustainable; to deal with rising energy costs; and to incubate the clean energy technologies and practices that will put our cities and towns, and the Commonwealth, at the hub of the 21st century clean energy economy.

For the first time ever, all the efficiency and renewable energy opportunities available to cities and towns are being collected under one organization's leadership with streamlined delivery of those programs. The Division's aim is to make sure that cities and towns maximize their opportunities to save energy in schools, city halls, and firehouses; to generate some of their energy needs from the sun and wind, local streams, forest trimmings and other renewable sources; and to make other decisions that reduce their environmental impact and carbon footprint.

The Green Communities Program offers a full range of programs and services to cities and towns on the path to becoming Green Communities. These include:

- ❖ **Energy Information Reporting System (EIS):** this easy-to-use tool benchmarks the energy performance of all municipally owned and operated buildings, as well as street lights and vehicles. This data management system is useful for all building types, and the electrical data is downloaded directly from the utilities.
- ❖ **Energy Audit Program:** this program provides auditors who assist communities in benchmarking their buildings with the EIS; performs detailed energy audits of those building that are the "bad performers"; provides recommendations for energy efficiency measures with their costs and estimated energy savings; and performs feasibility studies for clean technology where appropriate. As available, funds may be provided for implementation.
- ❖ **Energy Management Services Technical Assistance:** Energy Management Services, a form of energy savings performance contracting, can be an effective tool for cities and towns looking to implement significant energy savings measures without upfront capital; the projects are self funded through guaranteed energy savings. Per statute, DOER has oversight authority for city and town performance contracts, and can assist communities in all aspects of considering the use of this contracting mechanism.
- ❖ **Training of Facility Managers:** the Green Communities Division will be developing a training program for all community facility managers across the state, providing the latest information on simple, easy to implement energy efficiency measures that can be completed by maintenance staff as well as proper operations and maintenance to improve energy performance of buildings. The training will be offered regionally.
- ❖ **Green Communities Grant and Loan Program:** the Green Communities Act creates a grant and loan program for those communities who meet criteria involving zoning and permitting of energy facilities, energy use benchmarking and plans for reducing energy use, fuel efficient vehicles, and minimizing life-cycle energy costs for new construction. The funds will afford these communities the opportunity to implement significant energy efficiency measures, construct large renewable energy projects, or pursue other innovative projects that further the communities' efforts to reduce their fossil fuel energy consumption.